



November 18, 2021

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and
Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and
Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Carper and Grijalva and Ranking Members Capito and Westerman:

The Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society respectfully urges your committees' consideration for the bipartisan *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* (RAWA; S.2372/H.R.2773) that would have a profound impact on wildlife conservation in Ohio and the nation. This legislation would provide state and tribal wildlife agencies with a vital source of funding needed to proactively and cost-effectively conserve America's at-risk wildlife populations.

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society and its 15,000 professional and associated members serve to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife biologists and managers to sustain wildlife populations and habitat through science-based management and conservation.

RAWA would establish a national strategy to accelerate the recovery of more than 12,000 at-risk species throughout the country by investing \$1.4 billion per year in local solutions and the implementation of state wildlife action plans. In Ohio alone, there are now over 90 wildlife species identified as being at risk of extinction globally or nationally. These species, and an additional 300+ "species of conservation need" identified in Ohio's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), include birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, mussels, insects, and snails.

Unfortunately, Ohio's capacity to adequately deliver on the SWAP is in jeopardy and without active management, protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) may be needed for some species. It is in the best interests of Ohioans environmentally and economically to invest in these species prior to any potential need for ESA protections.

The wildlife crisis is not just an Ohio issue. Nationally, conservation efforts for these at-risk species are critically underfunded, only receiving about \$60 million annually through the existing State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program.

Passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act would match an appropriate solution to the scale of this crisis. By dedicating \$1.4 billion annually for the adequate implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans, wildlife professionals will have the resources needed to hold the nation's wildlife in the public trust for generations to come. Ohio's share would be nearly \$30 million, a huge and desperately needed increase beyond the currently allocated \$1.4 million. RAWA would provide states and local communities the opportunity to not only invest in species and habitat conservation, but also strengthen conservation education programming, increase climate resiliency, and protect our lands and wildlife for future generations.

Thank you for your continued dedication to protection of America's fish and wildlife and your consideration of this bipartisan legislation that will benefit communities throughout the nation.

Sincerely,



Gabriel R. Karns

OCTWS Secretary, on behalf of the Ohio Chapter of The Wildlife Society Board

614-292-3865

x Erin Hazelton
xi Renee Buck
xii Catherine Dennison
xiii Grace Dietsch

cc: The Honorable Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Steve Chabot, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Brad Wenstrup, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Jim Jordan, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Robert E. Latta, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Bill Johnson, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Bob Gibbs, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Warren Davidson, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Michael Turner, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Shontel M. Brown, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Troy Balderson, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Tim Ryan, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable David Joyce, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mike Carey, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
Keith Norris, Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships, The Wildlife Society